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december 1995
january 1996

Adeena Karasick

POETRY

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N

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick

INTERVIEW

Matrix

Writing Worth Reading Number 46

Carol Davison interviews Thomson Highway
Mark Abley on Kieran Carson
Poetry by Kamala Das, Lorna Crozier,
Mary diMichele, Christopher Dewdney
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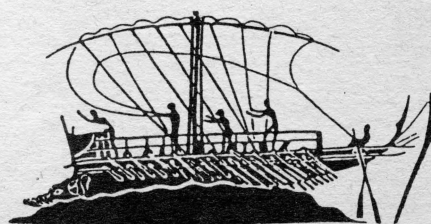
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ga press ad n  1

ga's zine, *HUMAN HUMANS*, initially intended for an autumn release, will now appear in January 96. Featured is the serialisation of Andy Brown's novel *U & I* AND SOMETIMES WHY, as well as stuff from Marc Bell, Steve Legari and Derek Guiler. Hopefully.

ga press ad n  2

The series of REAL SMALL BOOKS that ga began with Sandra Jeppesen's *BLISTER IN THE SUN* will carry on in the new year with real small books from Golda Fried, Lydia Eugene, Catherine Kidd and Trish Salah.

ga press ad n  3

MUSIC STORIES is to be a perfect-bound book released in the fall of 96, created (conceived, edited, designed) by ga and published by Vehicule Press. The call for submissions is out. ga is looking for interesting, innovative & fun writing which is concerned with music; specifically we're thinking of how music gives identity to teenagers, but this can be flexible. Send appropriate writings, running the spectrum of fictions, by mid-January 96.

ga press ad n  4

ga titles still available -
**SUPER SOTO AND OTHER SUPER STORIES*, Judy MacInnes Jnr (\$1)
**THE SENTENCE THAT THOUGHT LIFE WAS SIMPLE* (\$2)
**BLISTER IN THE SUN*, Sandra Jeppesen (\$1)
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- at danger! & The Word, or call and come by for tea.

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editorial



writing, in skirts & fits

"Qu'est-ce qui est incontournable dans le féminisme quand on écrit?" we ask ourselves in workshops and cafés and bars. we ask again, after feminism (but not "après la féministe"), what interstices of gender oppression and inhabitation can we complicitly complicate? and knowing the inscriptions of racialization (it's erasure, it's difference from itself), of class demarking/demeaning flesh and labour and lives (by turns insensate, deserved, abject) what force issues unskirtable in our writing pleasures' indulgence as right? if the struggle between antipornography feminists and sex radical feminists is the showy and precursive double of the queerly divisive (still largely unspoken) nonalignment of Lesbian and and Gay studies people and Feminist studies people in the contemporary academy, it is also seems a struggle strikingly blind to it's widespread displacement of race and class concerns from feminist agendas. it seems inevitable this ramify for *When Queer Theory Met Sally...*

but i don't want to write against pleasure, nor to condense all queer writing around an erotic thematics. it is just an uncertain discursive alignment, a)historical progression that suggestively elides and lines up the serious work of antisexist struggle against the pursuit of (women's) pleasure, as if such an opposition were sufficient or possible.

today what is unskirtably/skirtingly queer in this writing as a feminist is the partiality of each identifying gesture, owning that, and the pleasure and danger of being intermittently unhinged

trish salah

index is holidaying during the month of january but we will be back in february.

Be nice while we're gone!

p.s.
for assistance with this issue index would like to thank
Catherine Kidd
& The Wonderful Wizard of OZ.

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Genreicide

-Adeena Karasick

Heterogenous in the genesis
of genre on her,
insinuate minuet
elicit slits
stuffed fetish fissures in

iniquity fits. In the gift of
intaglio angling
in the folds of
fuselage usage

in the struggle of forces and fixities
in the perplexity of

a raucus caucus,
in the flush of

caesurae, ciphers, sutures
cinders, centers senders
scarred, so

in the madness of
liminal immanence.

In dissonance and dispossession

as the insane / *ensiegn desseigns*
Between the *signans* / *signatum*
the assigned signs and resigns
designs. *daseins*

in the stymie of this trajectory

as dactylic tongue spunk sucks
in the intimacy of *delicosa* cost courriers
as untried tied torrid ramparts the

undecidable
rescitable 'cause
Quasi was i was a
iterative act

without anguish or signal which
in turn determines

and brought to you by

a salutary split

in other words,
a lexical exit

in the interstices, a superfluity of
how the tell tolls,
trials

when fasicle sac. canopy siglum sucks
in turgescence, intumescence.

And my intuition says,

a l'ecart
a la carte
courts, a courtesan discourse
cuts, currents, curves

in an anthonymy,
wannabe

It's fact, you sd
factum actuum vacuum
a decorum forum a liminal
memory, splitting
contingency

enscenderia endable,
suspendable

which multiplies *likeness* across *likeness*
as illiac cusp, appendix, bract,
calyx, spur sepal

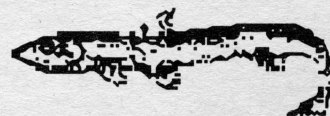
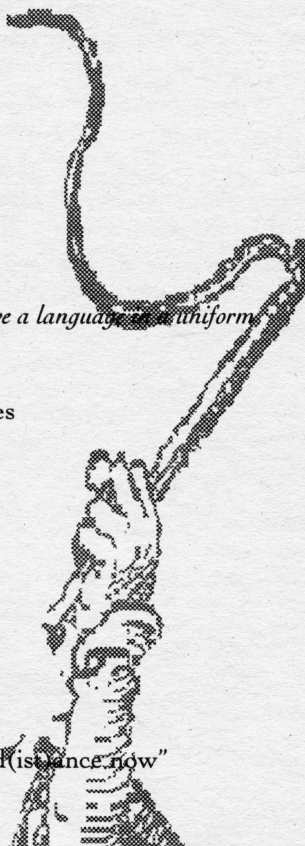
oops there goes another

massacre askant masque asks
amassed

in this unbearable secret
embryogeny

when i am dead. i am possibly dead.

in the solecism of still silence,
equivalence quickens



in a hymn, a hymen a homonymy
abandoned in

*cresset scars sunk in occipital surplus spews
an erogenous exogamy of extruded ruse*

increases in excressences
caresses

Proximate inputs illicit still abscesses

As night screams
slakes, absence within absence
paucity sauce slags
ravinous as

domestic memory
discursively rearticulated

in shattered disclosure.
slurs in intrusion
in desire ejected

no more i sd in a mo(r)t
du s'attendre a la mort
de la mort, se donner la mort or
en me donnant la mort, mors,
when these words amour,
moire mourns

when all simulacra aside,

anxiety rivals
in a postimperial grammar rammed

intercuts.
attachez la touche,
touching up the *untouched*,
out of touch, or

untouchable

So, tttttouch me, (as such)
'cause when the che vuoi?
saches between
chez soi/chez autre,
an embouchure touche,
a "disheminative" sham
nome shem

[for shame].



FLORUIT RETINUE

by Adeena Karasick

I

And before the sun, walls,
windows. Before
sequences opulence in the virus of
trellis suffices,

diurnal linen lineament
ciphers in the fullness like
a metonymic mimic

in the definition of
difference, appliance,
appearance,

II

In Lilongwe. Takin' la langue way. plus de
langue, lingers. As her tongue. kiss*. mouth.
closed around ellipse slip. tasting the tongue of
a tongue, a tome. L'anglais en Lilongwe. No
lily-livered sasparilla suckin' swill way. sways
as her tongue, teeth, lips part, solypse sip in
prolixis licks; a ventrilosquist kiss. in the
darkness of slick kissery articulate, as accessory
synnexes in the nexus collapses into
meconnaises kenosis kinesis askance.

Lilongwe, le *langelait*. In the intimacy of
borders, tongue.lick.taste. As clavicle hollow
slack ex-schize kiss caught in the covets risks
limits lip clots distance with desire

ou est Lilongwe, l'angue way.

III

As linguae grinds
in the magnate of rhetorical invasion.

IV

A ravenous graft
or traumatic masque acts
returns/upon itself
in the midday difference

V

In the sting of
abdicate covets incurs
in splenetic extension

her supplicant cunning
surfaces in yr cumulous
down. In the matrix of resistance
insistence. Her reticent
dissensus resents

*that maybe
hot and steamy maybe*

in the horror of desire

(ne pas de horror) or
abhorra or

in anamnesis,
mnemesis

* You must remember this.
A kiss is still a kiss. (Casablanca)

unheimlich ich:

VII

yr look or locus
acted out in

the echo of
articulation
in the strain of
resistance splits

And i bear yr bearing

folds or
faint feign
focuses / fixed as

the remainder or
remainder

in the economy of a foci loci
skewhiff riff, as if
stiffed as an ambient
pamby sifted in

VI

'cause interstitially speaking,
a misspelled swill of
kichotic crops
in the comma of
request. In the
famine laminate
latrine hydrax jacks,

*but the river was wide and i swam it,
'cause damn it, i am it, and i love*

when you hunker down
in the genre of

slipstream sucking light
come flummery

in the alliance of
night screws, clamps,
stains, questions,
as if i care in the gnawing
in the envy,

in the surplus of
spectrality, sacrality, alterity

syncretic etiquette
acts in the risk of
fixity [sic]
exits in

VIII

insinuant sinews solypse. as a threnody already.
an anachronistic massacre or an aneurysm mannerism

before.
exordium mortem or

SPEAKING

Interview with Eve Sedgwick by Trish Salah

index: How do you see feminist and queer theory developing in relation to one another? Do you think there's a break taking place in terms of either methodology or disciplinary and professional investments? It strikes me that while psychoanalysis may be a bone of contention, this may also be about jobs.

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick: I can't answer the question institutionally, because I'm just not that knowledgeable institutionally. My sense is that it's just a more productive moment for paradigms in queer theory than in feminist theory — which is not to say that I can point to this, that, or the other "new language" that people are talking about . . . But I think it's a fallow moment in feminist theory, it has been for a while. There are some well-rehearsed discontents with a lot of the available methodologies and paradigms, but not much sense of creative energy to get beyond that. I don't think that's really true for queer theory. For instance, I'm editing an issue of *Studies in the Novel*, and most of the submissions I've been getting, I would say, are deeply psychological, but not psychoanalytic. Also, most of them are not structured by a hermeneutic of suspicion. It seems to me that finding ways around those two routines is necessary right now.

There's just more hopeful and resourceful "reparative" energy being brought to the projects from places that are sub-labeled "queer" rather than from places that are sub-

labeled "feminist" at the moment.

i: Could you pinpoint a couple of places where you think particularly productive work, either scholarly or activist, is being done in terms of moving beyond what you call the "hermeneutic of suspicion"?

EKS: One of the books that's been a real model for me since I first saw it is Neil Bartlett's *Who Is That Man?: A Present for Mr. Oscar Wilde*, which partly gained so much from not being academic — it's so theoretically ingenious without having any explicit theoretical project at all. But also, I think it's genuinely reparative in the sense that the impulse that's most honoured in it is not a paranoid impulse, but an impulse to put together a past and a present. Those projects are not undertaken in denial

My sense is that it's just a more productive moment for paradigms in queer theory than in feminist theory

— that is, not by saying "we have always had this past, and we have this hallowed present," but in full knowledge of how much specifically reparative creativity has to go into it. It seems to me that that reparative impulse is probably more of a defining trait historically of what you might call "queer reading" than a paranoid impulse is, even though, theoretically, it's been a lot easier to honour the paranoid than the repar-

ative. But there hasn't been a way of making that reparative work theoretically respectable . . .

THE HERMENEUTIC OF SUSPICION

i: . . . or even public in some sense? Are you talking about queer pleasures in canonical reading, in doubly coded reading?

EKS: Yeah. The hermeneutic of suspicion is appropriate for a time of liberal consensus. As the liberal consensus disappears, it becomes clearer and clearer that much more creative energies have to be brought to bear.

i: A shift in context to your talk last night: could you briefly precis your project on Gary Fisher's work, and what that involves as a personal relation as well as a political and aesthetic relation?

EKS: Sure. Gary Fisher was a fiction writer who lived in San Francisco; a young, gay, african-american man, with a dazzling talent and concentration as a writer. He died of AIDS at the age of 32 in 1994. The project is a book of his stories and selections from his scores of notebooks and journals, which is coming out in September 1996 in series "Q" from Duke University Press. I'm editing the book because Gary asked me to. He was my student in a graduate course at UC Berkeley, and we got to be friends slowly. At the time that I taught him, he'd known for a while that he was HIV positive, and he'd

told only his sister and me. A few people had seen his writing and knew what an extraordinary writer he was, but very few — he was extremely reticent about showing his writing. I realized after a while that I was the only person who knew both of these things about him, and that there was considerable responsibility that went with that.

"UNINNOCENT" ENCOUNTERS

The stories range from Faulkner-style stories about childhood on army bases playing dolls with sisters, shooting fake movies — incredibly writerly, incredibly evocative, stirring and beautiful stories, which he was writing from the time he was in college — to quite savage and almost cubistically analytic vignettes of how race, sexuality and gender bisect and intersect one another in social and sexual encounters among the various cultures in San Francisco. Some of those later stories, along with being beautifully writerly, are quite raw sexually. The journals have a somewhat similar range of writing, but there's a lot more real graphic sexual stuff — there's a lot of that, beautifully, beautifully written. I think there are several volumes still waiting to be collected — narratives of "uninnocent" encounters that will make books unlike any others that have been published. But I thought this volume ought to come first. A lot of the sexuality, though by no means all, is structured around sexual subservience, or what is often described or perceived as sexual subservience, along racial lines — often with Gary, as a black man, seeing himself in a framework of sexual subservience to white men, and taking great exploratory pleasure from that.

That's one of the things that I think is going to make this book kind of explosive. I think the absolute candor and phenomenological density and representational ambitiousness of the book is going to clear public space for a much funkier and realer exploration of how sexualities do get inflected by matters such as historical crimes around race.

i: Can you talk about what shifts and tensions exist between your academic self production and the Fisher project, and your self-production as a poet? I guess I'm thinking of the pleasures and contradictions in these phantasmic identities.

EKS: You mean my phantasies of identity as Gary?

i: Well, yes, among others, as long as that doesn't structure the question in terms of a self/other dynamic of appropriation.

"I guess I'm thinking of the pleasures and contradictions in these phantasmic identities."

EKS: There are a couple of ways that this project marks some shifts. Probably the biggest shift is editing rather than writing.

This is one of four or five editing projects that I find myself doing. The edited volume of Sylvain Tompkins' writing, among others. I don't know why it is that I'm suddenly editing things in middle age, it's not that I'm not writing, but I guess maybe I've become a little less solipsistic. But I think that with both Tompkins and Fisher there was a strong phantasmatic of rescue, getting material out there, getting people recently dead animated by attention, using living people who appreciate their writing.

Then the other obvious way that Gary's book was a departure for me was that I hadn't written about african-american writing before. That was not because I wasn't interested in it or thinking about it, but because I had that form of pride or arrogance that doesn't let me talk about something because I think it needs to be talked about; I talk about it only when I feel as though I actually have something substantive to bring to the conversation. And I hadn't felt that previously about conversations around african-american identities and intersections of those conversations with conversations

around sexuality. But in this case ^{and} it was clear to me that there was ^{ex} something that needed to be done that I was the person best situated to do it, and that it was very urgent that it be done and that it be done well. About the genre thing, in some ways that's the least wrenching of these transitions for me. I've always been very strongly invested in insisting that criticism could use every bit of writerly energy that anyone can bring to it, and that so-called creative writing could use every bit of intelligence and conceptional sinew and even theoretical speculativeness that anyone can bring to it. One is making a formal decision and maybe a decision about audience in deciding between those two modes, but not a decision about what is allowed into the writing.

SEXUAL VERNACULARS

One thing that seemed congenial and exciting to me was how clear it was in Gary's writing and in his history that his engagement with very sophisticated literary and social theory in graduate school, and an explosion of creativity in his writing, and a much greater exploratoriness of sexual vernaculars in San Francisco, mutually fed each other in the most direct ways. It's clear that he simply had no sense of separate domains there, and I love that. I find it inspiring.

i: Is there a separation and pleasure in crossing those domains or just a feeling that those domains really aren't substantially separate?

EKS: Earlier on, they seemed more separate, and there was a lot of electricity between them that was the source of great excitement, as well as frustration. More and more, I feel them just edging closer in my writing practices.

Eve Sedgwick is a professor of English at Duke University and the author of several books of critical theory as well as the volume of poetry, *Fat Art, Thin Art*. 20

Patient

An excerpt from an unpublished manuscript by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick

Apparently it's as a patient that I want to emerge. "Oh, I guess I'm supposed to call you my client, not my patient," Sh said once, "but that's the way they taught us, back in graduate school - seems like too much trouble to change."

Besides, I like "patient." It is true I can be very patient. And Sh is like this too, so the word doesn't feel like placing me at a distance. Then, it seems a modest

word that makes no claim to anything but - wanting to be happier

and wanting, it's true, someone else to shoulder a lot of agency in the matter of my happiness.

In an expensively renovated old building, a space. A large, rugless square made almost cubic by its lofty ceiling. The low bookcases hold not overly many books; the low desk shows a modest, tractable paper mess; framed prints, in a few neat sheaves on the floor, look as if they could wait years more for hanging.

Under the tall windows there's a scattering of the meaningful chotchkas that I suppose people give their shrinks - many are made of glass. Big chairs flank a sofa bland with patches of pastel.

Space not only light with sun and canister-lighting but, if there's an appreciative way to use the word, "lite," meta-physically lite. I'm wondering

whether it reflects no personality, or already is one.

On record, the triggering event was a breast cancer diagnosis eighteen months ago.

Sh doesn't produce an empathetic face at this, or say "That must have been hard for you." He makes an economical nod.

"I kind of did beautifully with it. I bounced back from the mastectomy, and when it turned out that there was some lymph node involvement too, I tolerated six months of chemotherapy without too many side effects. You know, I hated it, and it completely wore me down, but..."

"The saving thing was that for me it wasn't all about dread. I know there are people whose deepest dread is to have cancer, to undergo surgery, to deal with the likelihood of dying." I shake my head many times.

Those are not my deepest dread. I dread

every bad thing that threatens people I love; for me, dread only

I may stop knowing how to like and desire the world around me.

"That's it, what you mean by real depression?"

"Oh, yeah."

In some ways the cancer diagnosis came at the best possible time. - The best time if feeling ready to die is a criterion. It was about two months after a book of mine had come out.

"What kind of books do you write?"

"I'm a literary critic, I work in gay and lesbian studies."

This was my second book in the field; it was about how fateful the bifurcation between gay and straight people has been in the past century. The writing, the organization of this book came hard to me for some reason. So I was amazed at how satisfying its publication was. As an object, the book itself looked lovely - everyone said so. And for an academic book it got a lot of attention, a lot of praise.

"It was one of those happy times when you say to yourself, Okay, this is good, this is enough; I'm ready to go now. When the diagnosis came I was feeling - as an intellectual - loved, used, appreciated. I would have been very, very content to quit while I was ahead."

"Did it surprise you to be feeling that?"

"No. No."

No.

To feel loved and appreciated - I've slowly grown used to that. And to feel the wish of not living! It's one of the oldest sensations I can remember.

"But you didn't get your wish."

"Oh, no, breast cancer doesn't usually work like that. I felt sick, but that was from the treatment, not the illness - if the cancer ever does get me, it probably won't be for years. And the chances of that are something like 50-50."

Probably there's a smile on Shannon's face after I produce this. Certainly not because he wants me sick, and not either that he's glad I could be well. It's because, momentarily, he identifies with the mechanical elegance of the trap this disease has constructed for an anxious and ambivalent psyche. 50-50, I think he's thinking, perfect for turning this particular person inside-out.

Sometime in these early sessions, Sh says about why he became a therapist: "I've always been fascinated by machines. When I was a kid, I'd take them apart and put them back together just to make sure I knew how they worked. It's still a lot of the reason I like my job."

First encounter; my therapist's gift for guyish banalization.

I'm forty-two, and what is it I bring to this meeting in the way of expectations? My history as a patient is like my history as a smoker: I tried it a lot of times years ago, but never learned to inhale. All that depression in my teens and twenties means that over the years I've started a lot of therapy. Especially in the hardest years, in graduate school, there were several attempts to get shrunk, one lasting an entire six months. They all ran aground in the same way. I'd go to these women (women of course: I was a woman, and who else could understand

if not another woman?) bursting out of my eyesockets with pain



and within three or four sessions at most, a particular impasse would have gotten wedged so firmly between us we could neither of us move.

I'm thinking, there were some things that happened in the past few years that I had no defenses at all to deal with. It was like the Maginot line: I marshalled the formidable, practiced resources of the decades-long war of attrition I'd fought with my depressiveness - and they were completely irrelevant. Instantly shattered to bits.

So I think I might have made a near-conscious decision a year ago, after the chemo was over, when my hair was growing back. If I can fit the pieces of this self back together at all, I don't want them to be the way they were. Not because I thought I could be better defended, either: what I wanted was to be realer. What I fear now is

to have long to thirst
anymore in the stony
desert of that self

threatening to recompose itself in the same way in the same dazed and laborious place.

I've brought my list of demands. no echoing and mirroring please. If I announce,

I find no peace, and all my war is done,
I fear and hope, I burn and freeze like ice,

I don't want him to respond as all my grad-school shrinks used to, I think I'm hearing some ambivalence in what you say.

He nods. But, "Did I just do that to you?"

"Hm, I though you were asking something substantive, not just paraphrasing me for my own benefit. a skin is great, I like it — but when someone paraphrases in that routine way, I feel as though my own words are being set aside, disrespected."

"It's true, I was asking. Okay. I'll have to think a little more about it, but I expect I can probably agree to that

one."

"Then, there's something about pleasure that might be important. I don't know how to say it properly: I've gotten hold of an intuition that if things can change for me, it won't be through a very grim process. It won't happen as I always used to imagine in the old days, by delivering myself up for good at the door of the Law. I used to take one deep masochistic breath, and determine I was ready to surrender to the disciplinary machine — in enough pain to have to do it — but then of course I didn't know how to, and couldn't sustain my resolve anyway; and nothing about the therapy would work. Now it seems that if anything can bring me down through to real change, it may be only some kind of pleasure. Does this make any sense to you?"

"Oh, yeah, it makes plenty of sense. Let me think about how it feels to me to be doing this...no, grim truly isn't the feeling. At least it's never very grim for very long. I have to tell you it's often painful —"

My slightly secret smile. "I tolerate pain OK."

"But pleasure, yes, a fair amount of pleasure is what keeps me at it, too. Different kinds of. The people I take on as patients are people I anticipate liking and having some fun with. I could with you, I'm pretty sure. We'd invent our ways."

"Good. Then - well, I need you to be my age or older."

"Where does that come from?"

"I don't know, but something tells me I can't face learning after months of therapy that you're, like, 32."

"No. I'm 47. I think I can promise always to remain older than you."

"Also - these next ones are far more important - I've been a feminist for as long as I've known what the word means, and I need for my therapist to be one. I don't have a laundry list or a litmus test to define it, but I'm assuming you probably know if you are."

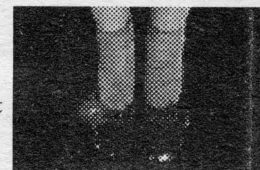
This gets two, near-expressionless nods.

"And - I guess I'm not asking you about your sexual orientation, but queer stuff is so central to my life. Even aside from my own sexuality, it's at the heart of just about everything I do and love as an adult. Also if the world is divided - and it seems to be, doesn't it? - between people who are inside of the experience of the AIDS epidemic and people who are outside of it, then I seem to be way inside."

"So probably if I'm going to relax with you at all, I need to start out knowing - as much as possible to know - that you aren't phobic about all that. Actually that you feel very fine and at home about it."

"I guess I'm not asking you about your sexual orientation," I said - and he nodded soberly. I don't know what I'm supposed to assume about this. The very emphatic recommendation of Sh came from another shrink, one who knew me pretty well. And experience shows that I'm one of those people who when others say to me,

"I'm just sure you'd get along marvelously with



12 X" - then X is gay.

12 But Shannon isn't immediately legible in this way. It's true, gratefully his hand is un-wedding-ringed, his desk undecked with any wife and kids. But couldn't that be from reticence or delicacy?

Still, if delicacy, that would itself please and suit me.

He doesn't look delicate. Or gay.

He looks more like a guy. Someone who's never viewed his body, or had or wanted it viewed, much as an object of desire. Someone also for whom, maybe - unlike me or most anyone I love - his entitlement to exist, the OK-ness of being who and as he is, has never seemed very seriously questionable.

It worries me: how could someone like that learned to think or feel? Seemingly he's not even Jewish. I already know the demographics of people in the mental health field are even more mixed than their assumptions and training; I can't encounter only Viennese refugees, don't even want to. Still,

this nasal-voiced, corn-fed Dutchman from the heartlands: has he any soul?

And he's saying, "I don't want to say, 'Some of my best friends are....'"

Then an ungirdled, self-satisfied laugh. Says he works a lot with lesbian and gay clients; also gives time to the Lesbian and Gay Health Project over on 9th Street.

He adds, "But there's honestly no one template I want to get people to fit into. I'm certainly not in this profession because I want to turn out insurance salesmen." He produces the formulation confidently, as though he's said it with great success to a thousand previous patients. And there's an additional, habituated-sounding laugh that goes with its articulation.

"- or at least," he amends, "that's what I always used to say to people. Then one day I found myself saying it to a perfectly nice man who sold insurance. Maybe really that's fine too?" A chuckle.

It's a good thing Shannon is not trying to recruit me for Aetna or Allstate, because he'd have his work cut out for him.

At least, it's news to me if thy're keen on filling trousered, crew-cut, 250-pound, shy middle-aged women writers, whether depressed or not, to promote financial instruments to American homeowners.

Moving to the door of his office, we make a tentative appointment for the next week, and agree that I'll call him if I decide I want to keep it. I say I expect I will - but of the four therapists I've arranged to "interview," there's one more I haven't seen, and it wouldn't do to prejudge. The fourth one's a psychiatrist; a possible advantage is that she could prescribe the antidepressants I'm also thinking of starting. All this makes sense to Sh, and in mutual friendliness and uncertainty we part.

But oh my. Even stepping down to the waiting room, I think I feel it already, the uneven double pressure that will whirlpool around this decision.

From one direction come words, my scornful private words, the ones I never say, among the worst I know. Fatuous is one. Complacent another, Stupid is the overarching theme. "How dumb would someone have to be..." thrusts suddenly into my head - how dumb, specifically, to see me as someone likely to be charmed or reassured in this way?

Is Shannon stupid? In the abstract, I've wrapped my mind around the unlikelihood of connecting with a shrink who's brilliant or even an intellectual. I can even doubt that I'd choose to deal with one. But that's in the abstract; in the real world, stupidity isn't a lack but an aggressively positive, entitled presence, and to chafe my own mind and psyche raw against it would be cruel medicine.

These fiercely devaluing phrases:

a storm driving hail -
seeds and mica flakes of snow
against the deep hill.

For from the other side there come no words.

Does the defense rest?

Yes, there could have been words in thoughtful Shannon's favour: the quiet elegance of some of his answers, kindness of them all, attractive queer avoirdupois, the very evident readiness not only to respect but enjoy an idiom not his own. But what I find instead is only, wordlessly, this: a fact of life in its staggering specific gravity

present to me, like
earth, less as a new need than
a new element

If my heart held an image then, perhaps it came from the Scientific American of my early teens. Do I remember or imagine it? An article about Harry Harlow's baby monkey studies, we'll say. Painfully flashbulbed black-and-white photos, plus drawings in the gently stippled, tactile style of the magazine, show hairy infants cowering in avoidance of their wire experimental "mothers," rigged though she is to yield milk if only they'd give her spiky frame a nuzzle. They won't. Where they cling instead is to the milkless, white, puffy breast of her sister, also wire, but padded with cathectible terrycloth that dimples with their embrace...

Who would dare try to break back from the terrycloth bosom, one by one, those scrawny, holding, ravenous, loving toes?

Then let the same fearless person try to come between me and my appointment next week with the peony sunlight of this office, airy rondure into whose

yielding lap I seem
already to have leapt for
good. The oddest thing!

reviews

Gunning For...

Golda Fried
Beds & Shotguns
edited by Mike O'Connor
Insomniac Press, 1995

Beds & Shotguns is an ambitious project combining the poetry of four Canadian poets: Tricia Postle, Death Waits, Paul Howell McCafferty and Diana Fitzgerald Bryden. The first thing that will seduce you or blow you away is the graphic design. Most of the poems come with a small design or photo by Mike O'Connor. As the book progresses, you'll catch on quick: if there's a fish in the poem, there's a fish on the page; swings, and there'll be swings. The objective of the collection? According to the back cover, "*Beds & Shotguns* is also a metaphor for the opposite extremes of love." Great idea. But then, the poems don't live up to these extremes. Usually, it's a matter of not giving the reader enough mystery. Lines are repeated too often or expressions are captured in a simple "ah" or "oh" that glosses things over. Postle is the bed-down with me romantic in the bed-gun spectrum of things. And I was all ready to receive poems that you want to reach for under the bed when your lover storms off and you need to find someone else's confusion. Her poems, however, lean toward the literal but they're best when words go surreal like "rose breathing/ rose burning." Death Waits has a great name. In "SLOP: an in-depth expose" he compares a love relationship as bicycle spokes that appear "and then are gone like a mist/ with the rest of traffic." What's going on? Postle compares a love relationship to either catching or not catching a bus in "revelation in transit." Way too literal. But Waits' lines, "the liquids you cried and pissed/ in each other's presence" are poetic realism. McCafferty is a master of rhythm, especially in his one-line poems like

"at the end of the dawn," a progression packed with force behind every word. He captures images beautifully like the "falling rice of the rain" in "the windmill" but too he robs the reader of mystery, telling us the soul is "in constant longing" in "a kinda gettin' down thang." In "the windmill," a red ribbon in a lost-love's hair becomes a "red rag/tied to a sail" that ruffles, instead of something more fucked, like a mashed-in ulcerated heart. Bryden, too, talks about giving head on the Queen St. streetcar — literally opening a guy's head and thus his soul, if only "to spill his sweet white milk." I guess I was aching more for semen, blood, and sweat than the frames of the messy bed and the long barrel of the gun.

Bonne Bons?

Anne Francis
Teenage Maladies
delectable bon bons
self release, 1995

Post-rock? Lo-fi? Get over it like yesterday's trash. The Delectable Bon Bons are 100% pure schizoid flash!

There's absolutely no slouching on the Bon Bons' debut release, *Teenage Maladies*. Always already pop stars, the band offers up a tasty coupling of the excesses of rock'n'roll with the indulgences of spoken word.

Seemingly indefatigable, the Bon Bons get to work only after the last Barry White song; imagine the distilled overspill of a ménage-à-trois involving John Cage, David Johanssen, and Buffy Ste Marie and you're beginning to get an idea of the Bon Bon's brew.

Featuring Nez Automatic's keyboard noodling, Saliva Devine's silky falsetto, Vita von Voom's bass defying, and Phil Sprocket's otherworldly punching, the Bon Bons' spasmelodic combo of nasty grooves with excruciating anticipatory silences takes apart and reconstructs the perfect three

minute pop song so that, while the same amount of time passes, the sense is, like the moment of orgasm, outside time.

Lyricaly, the Bon Bons are the product of an unholy union between Bertold Brecht and Jacqueline Susan. Finally, the excessive posturing and relentless referencing of the Bon Bons' pop product are sucked up like discarded candy wrappers by a vacuum of their own creation.

Nostalgia Cuts

Buffy Bonanza
Dropped Names
Vincent Tinguely
& Victoria Stanton
egg sandwich press, 1995

These days everyone and her dog does layout, knows a JPEG from a GIF and knows her way around Adobe like a kid knows her way around a favorite candy store. While this high-end slick production is appealing and often impressive, I often long for the cut and paste era; choppy patches of text, odd formats, bastard columns.

So when I picked up, "Drop Names," a book/document/zine by Former Fluffy Pagan Echoes, Vincent Tinguely and Victoria Stanton, I was taken aback and more than a little pleased. It's of the old school of production, replete with wonky cut and paste and a grab bag of thought and aesthetics. It's a paean to the power of a photocopier in a world inundated by Quark documents. The artifact comes in a brown paper bag which is less wrapping than part of the whole. The folded sheet inside is a melange of appropriated text and subverted documents. It's conceptual work; one gets a feeling from the overall piece rather than from each segment.

One of the things I really like about this piece is the tactile relationship you have with it. You take it out of the bag, unfold, refold, flip it, put it in the bag, read the bag, take it out of the and so on... and so on... and so on.

Peruse this intimate document. I do offer some words of warning: Don't expect to read this as zine or journal: it's a non-linear dialogue that should be embraced for its dialectic, rather than its progression.

Word is

Wednesday, Dec. 6

Following the march commemorating the Massacre at L'École Polytechnique, all women are invited to attend a benefit cabaret for the Concordia Women's Centre. The evening will feature live music and spoken word by Zoe Whittle, Victoria Stanton & Buffy Bonanza among others. This is your only opportunity to pick up the BOFF (Bunch of Fucking Feminists) cassette, featuring many of the evenings performers. Only 100 copies were made. The show is free, but donations are welcome. The event takes place at 7:30 pm, on the 7th floor of the Hall Bld., 1455 de Maissonneuve O. For info, call 844-7431.

Saturday, Jan. 13

There'll be good rocking Tonight! Where? At Bistro 4,

That's where! **YAWP** presents for your entertainment and edification, **Elaine O'Connor, Chicago Beau, Andrew Sweeny, Buzz Blast Off Trio, and Melanie Newton.** Be there or Be somewhere else. Call Jake at 843-6529.

Tuesday, Dec. 17, Jan. 30

Sad; so sad, the way we've consistently got the date wrong for these shows. Well, nevermore & please accept our humblest apologies. **Salman Husain and Atif Siddiqi** host **Amethyst Tuesdays** at La Huerta, 1355 St. Catherine East. Amethyst Tuesdays is an eclectic salon-style lounge featuring performances, exhibits, dj's and a cocktail included in the cover. For information and/or portfolio submissions 279-2031.

Listings spelt LJ

Dec. 1

5 pm.
Nebula presents **Angloman** Launch with Mark Fhainblum and Gabriel Morrissette. 1832 St. Catherine West.

10 pm.
Live Comic Art Jam at Stornaway, 1407 St. Alexandre. With Local Rabbits, Kirk Explosion, Fidget, and Bunk for \$5. Call 288-7075.

Dec 1-16

Wed, Thur. 1-7 pm.
Fri, Sat, Sun. 1-5 pm.
Montréal Dada 1995: Video, performance and poetry. Concert Dec. 14 at 8 pm. For info call 872-5338.

Dec 1,2,3,9,10

2 pm, 7 pm.
Geordie Productions presents Dicken's *A Christmas Carol* at the D. B. Clarke Theatre, Hall Building, 1455 de Maissonneuve W. Children \$6, students & seniors \$8, general public \$12. Call Ingrid Moerman at 845-9810, 848-4742.

Dec. 3

10 am.-5pm.
Montreal Comic Book Convention.

Eighty-five dealers from across North America, at the Delta Montreal, 475 President Kennedy. Admission is \$4. Call 482-7913.

6-8 pm.
A Blue Boy in a Black Dress: A memoir by **T.F. Rigelhof** will be launched at Double Hook, 1235A Greene Ave. 932-5093.

8 pm.
Les Bruits du Silence, poetry at Bistro 4. 844-6246.

7:30 pm.
Commemorating the Massacre at L'École Polytechnique, the Concordia Women's Centre presents the BOFF (Bunch of Fucking Feminists) cassette launch, with live music and spoken word performances. All women are welcome. The event takes place on the 7th floor of the Hall Bld., 1455 deMaissonneuve O. For info, call 844-7431.

9 pm.
Café Sarajevo presents singer / song-writers **Ben Sures** and **Joel Fafard.**

Dec. 5

Dec. 6

284-5629.

8 pm.
The Urban Wanderers Reading Series presents: *Intimate Attachments: Jane Munro and Friends* at Bistro 4. Joining **Jane Munro** will be **Erin Mouré, Jan Conn, Julie Bruck, and Mary di Michele.** Bar proceeds to benefit the Montreal Sexual Assault Center.

9 pm.
Café Sarajevo presents poetry by **Hélène Dorion** and **Luc Perrier** with the singer Serey. 284-5629.

Véhicule Press is holding a joint launch of its fall books at the Atwater Library Auditorium, 1200 Atwater Ave. For info call 844-6073.

9 pm.
YAWP at Bistro 4 with **Pascal et Sébastien, Norm Dionne, Lisa Gamble, Dave Sanders, and Conrad Sichler.** Call Jake at 843-6529.

Dec. 7

Dec. 8

Dec. 9

Dec. 11

7 pm.

Anne Cimon will read from her book *No Country for Women* and from *Song for June*, a novel in progress, at the Atwater Library, 1200 Atwater Ave.

Dec. 14-17

Recent Work by Crios Ross: Image and Text Inspired by Film at Stornaway. Party on Dec. 16 with **Stoney and AdamtoZoe**. Dec. 15 is the Stornaway Xmas party: *The Best Xmas Party Ever at Stornaway Ever Part IV*.

Dec. 19

8 pm.

Salmon Husain and Atif Siddiqi host **Amethyst Tuesdays** at La Huerta, 1355 St. Catherine East. Amethyst Tuesdays is an eclectic salon-style lounge featuring performances, exhibits, dj's and a cocktail included in the cover. Portfolio submissions: 279-2031.

8 pm.

Les Bruit du Silence, poetry at Bistro 4.

until Dec. 22

McGill Friends of the Library presents *Hans Christian Andersen: Beyond the Walls of the Nursery*, in the McLennan Redpath Library lobby. Call 398-4740 for a tour.

Dec. 31

Stornaway's New Year's Eve party with invited guests.

Jan.-Feb.

McGill Friends of the Library presents *Memory and Manuscripts: Medieval Readers and their Books*, in the lobby of the McLennan Redpath Library. Call 398-4740 for a tour.

Jan. 13

9 pm.

YAWP at Bistro 4 with: **Elaine O'Connor, Chicago Beau, Andrew Sweeny, Buzz Blast Off Trio, and Melanie Newton**. For info call Jake at 843-6529.

Jan 27

9 pm.

YAWP at Bistro 4 with **Celinne**

Delisle, Emily S. Downing, and Norm Dionne. For info call Jake at 843-6529.

Jan. 28

8 pm.

Mitsiko presents *La Vache Enragée*. A night of bilingual poetry and performance at Bistro 4 featuring Fortner Anderson and Prestor John. Contact 848-3186.

Jan. 30

8 pm.

Salman Husain and Atif Siddiqi host **Amethyst Tuesdays** at La Huerta, 1355 St. Catherine East. Amethyst Tuesdays is an eclectic salon-style lounge featuring performances, exhibits, dj's and a cocktail included in the cover. Portfolio submissions, 279-2031.



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Grey Matters	CKUT 90.3 FM	Thurs 7-8PM	Fortner Anderson.	Lectures.
Dromostexte	CKUT 90.3 FM	Thurs 8-9PM	Fortner Anderson.	Spoken Word
Books on Jewish Themes	CKUT 90.3 FM	Tues 7PM	Stanley Asher	Reviews.
Simply Speaking	CINQ 102.3 FM	Sat10:00AM	Stanley Asher	Interviews.
Books on Popular Culture	CINQ 102.3 FM	Sat 9:30AM	Stanley Asher	Reviews.
Between the Covers	CBC 940 AM	Mon-Fri 10PM	Serialized novel readings.	
Saturday Spotlight	CBC 940 AM	Sat 5:08PM	Shelley Pomerance	Arts in Quebec.
Writers & Company	CBC 940 AM	Sun 3PM	Eleanor Wachtel	Literary figures.
Selected Shorts	WCFF 91.9 FM	Thurs 11AM	Actors read acclaimed short stories.	
Word Jazz	WCFF 91.9 FM	Thurs 11PM	Ken Nordine	Spoken Word
Tell Me A Story	WCFF 91.9 FM	Fri 7 PM	Contemporary authors reading their work.	

classifieds

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index has an estimated readership of 10000 people, all of whom read. Next issue our call for submissions section will be incorporated into a classified section serving writers, translators, typists, tutors, agents, etc... If you are any of those things you'll probably want to list with us. Just think, 10000 people who read— at 10¢ a word how can you go wrong?

To list, call Daegan now @ (514) 525-3325

call ⁴ submissions...

Music Stories

ga press, in conjunction with **Véhicule press**, is seeking out variously genred writings and graphics for a book about music, or with music in it, or in your life. Send cool or geeky stuff before Jan. 15 to:


ga press 3997 Coloniale, H2W 2B9 or contact Colin at 286-9950.

Conundrum press announces a call for submissions for its first annual **meta-fiction** competition. Anything you can fit on the back of a black & white photo. No correlation necessary. First prize publication and \$75. Send all submissions, with S.A.S.E. before Jan. 1996 to: Conundrum press, 266 Fairmount, MTL QC. H2V 2G3

Other Muses...

new women writers in montreal.

Attention all women writers: submit to the anthology *Other Muses*: new women writers in Montreal. A forum designed to energize and recognize women's talent. Established and previously unpublished writers are encouraged to submit their work — there are no requirements in terms of theme or style. Please submit 2 - 8 pages of material, poems no longer than 60 lines in length. Contact Julie Crysler at **Other Muses**, 415 rue LeMoyne, (Rez de C.) Montréal, Québec H2Y 1Y5 or julie_crysler@babylon.montreal.qc.ca.



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